

AMENDMENTS TO THE FIGURES

The drawings are objected to for reasons cited in the instant Office Action. Attached are replacement Figures 2 and 5 incorporating changes that address the objection. Also attached are annotated Figures 2 and 5 identifying the changes made.

REMARKS

Please cancel Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-13 without prejudice. Claims 4, 6 and 14-24 are pending. Claims 4, 6, 14, 19 and 22 are amended herein. No new matter is added as a result of the claim amendments.

Claims 6 and 14-24 are indicated as being allowable under conditions described in the instant Office Action. Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of Claims 6 and 14-24.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to for reasons cited in the instant Office Action. Figures 2 and 5 are amended to address the objection. Also, the specification is amended to address items identified by the Applicants.

112 Rejections

The instant Office Action states that Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-3, 5 and 7-13 are canceled herein, and so a discussion of their rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is rendered moot at this time. As amended, Claims 4, 6 and 14-24 are compliant with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

102 Rejections

The instant Office Action states that Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Lai (U.S. Patent No. 6,526,112). The subject matter of Claim 1 has been incorporated into Claim 6, which is indicated as being allowable if rewritten independent form including all of the limitations of its base claim

(Claim 1) and any intervening claims (Claim 5). Claim 1 is thus canceled, and a discussion of the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is rendered moot at this time.

103 Rejections

The instant Office Action states that Claims 2-5 and 7-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Lai in view of Otani et al. ("Otani;" U.S. Patent No. 4,853,642).

Claims 2-5

The subject matter of Claim 5 has been incorporated into Claim 6, which is indicated as being allowable if rewritten independent form including all of the limitations of its base claim (Claim 1) and any intervening claims (Claim 5). The amended Claim 6 is in condition for allowance, and Claims 2-3 and 5 are canceled. Claim 4 is dependent on Claim 6, and is thus allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim. Therefore, a discussion of the rejection of Claims 2-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is rendered moot at this time.

Claims 7-13

Claims 7-13 are canceled herein, and so a discussion of their rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is rendered moot at this time.

Conclusions

In light of the above remarks, reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

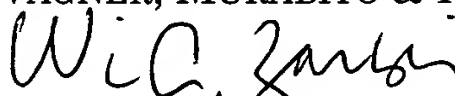
Based on the arguments presented above, it is respectfully asserted that Claims 4, 6 and 14-24 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, allowance of these claims is solicited.

The references cited but not relied upon have been reviewed. These references were not found to show or suggest the present claimed invention: U.S. Patent Nos. 6,741,668, 6,480,047, 6,362,670, 6,347,128, 5,940,609, 5,473,639, 5,012,494, 4,827,225 and 4,019,153.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Date: 3/8/05

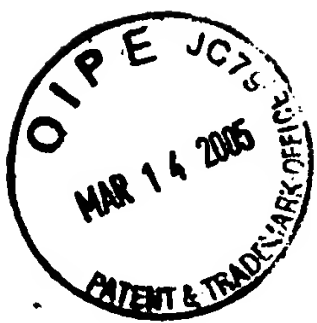
Respectfully submitted,
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Attachments: Replacement Figures 2 and 5
Annotated Figures 2 and 5 Showing the Changes Made



Serial No. 09/954,453
Reply to Office Action Mailed 12/9/04
Annotated Sheet showing Change

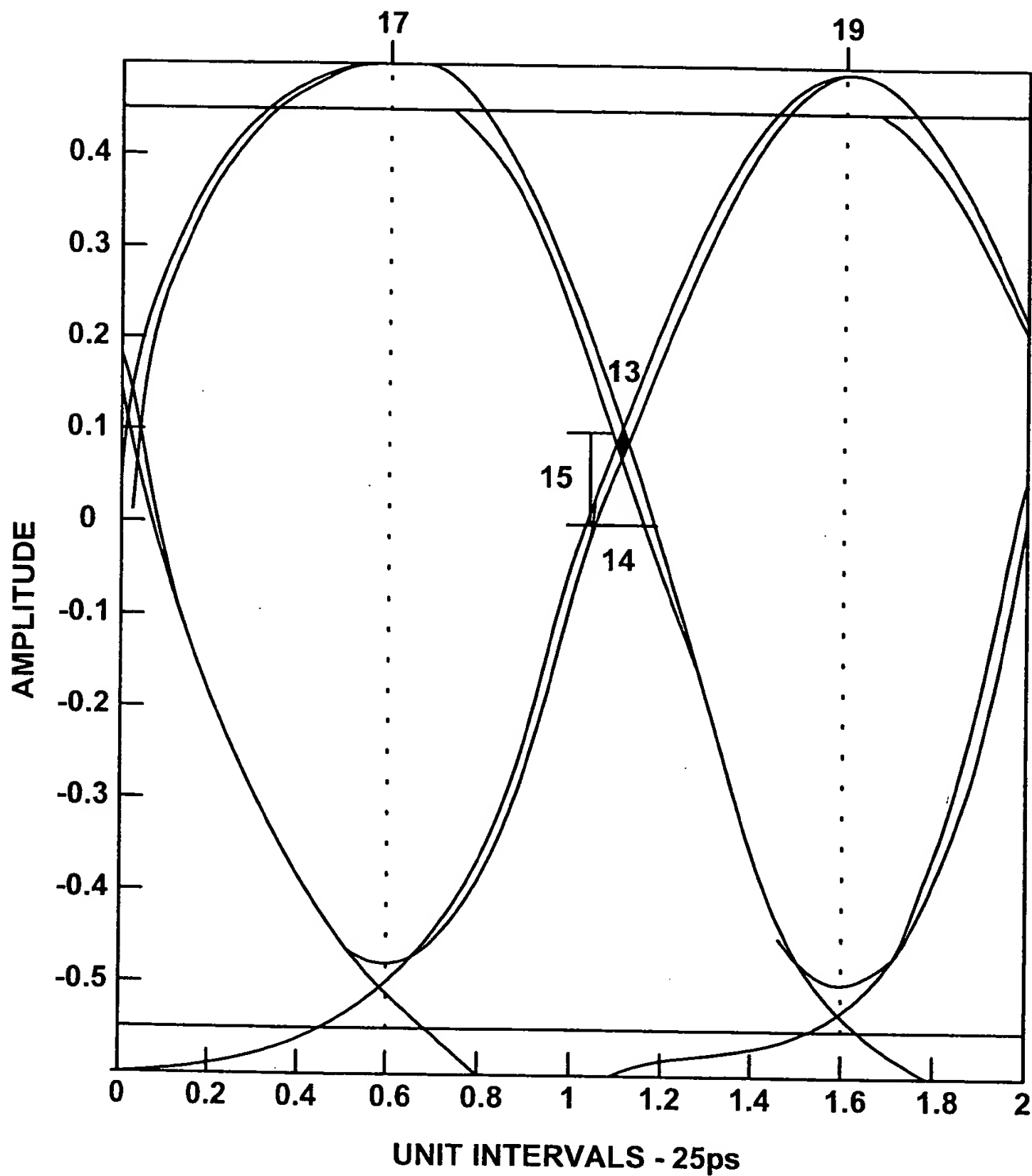


FIG. 2 (Prior Art)

Added

